

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

1920

PRINTED BY ORDER OF PARLIAMENT



OTTAWA
THOMAS MULVEY
PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY
1921

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Hon. P. E. BLONDIN

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

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Chairman

F. C. T. O'HARA

R. BOUDREAU

F. C. C. LYNCH

OTTAWA, March 1, 1921.

*To the Advisory Committee of Council
on Government Publications.*

GENTLEMEN,—In submitting its fourth annual report the Editorial Committee desires to call attention to the fact that the Joint Committee on Printing, in its second report to Parliament last year, expressing its appreciation of the work accomplished by the Editorial Committee since its inception in October, 1917, recommended to the Government an extension of its authority and jurisdiction. The Government immediately acted upon this recommendation, and the following Order in Council was adopted extending the scope of the committee's work:—

P. C. 1452

*CERTIFIED COPY of a Report of the Committee of the Privy Council, approved by
His Excellency the Governor General on the 29th June, 1920.*

The Committee of the Privy Council have had before them a report, dated 24th June, 1920, from the Secretary of State, recommending on the advice of the Civil Service Commission, that in the interest of the effective control of public printing, as required by the reorganization of the Department of Public Printing and Stationery, the position of Chairman of the Editorial Committee be established in the Department of the Secretary of State.

The minister observes that this committee has rendered useful service in reducing the copies and editions of the Government publications and that the functioning of the committee should be continued permanently, independent of the organization of the Department of Public Printing and Stationery.

The minister further recommends that the committee's powers include,—

1. Authority to pass and approve copy for printing.
2. Authority to advise with officers of departments and to determine with them the number of copies of editions of publications that are to be printed and distributed.
3. Authority to advise with departmental officers respecting the preparation of manuscripts and the elimination of any such manuscripts or portions thereof as are deemed unnecessary or not in the public interest.
4. Authority to direct an annual or more frequent revision of the publication mailing lists of the several departments.
5. Authority to determine the proper disposition of obsolete and surplus publications in store in the various government departments as well as in the Distribution Office of the Department of Public Printing and Stationery and supervise their disposition.
6. Authority to eliminate duplication in government publications as far as possible and where required to determine the publications that fall within the sphere of any particular department.

The committee concur in the foregoing recommendations and submit the same for approval.

(Sgd.) RODOLPHE BOUDREAU,
Clerk of the Privy Council.

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On the same day an Order in Council (P.C. 1453) was approved appointing Mr. Fred Cook, Permanent Chairman of the Editorial Committee, and abolishing the position of Assistant King's Printer hitherto held by him.

Concurrently the Hon. P. E. Blondin was added to the Advisory Committee of Council, and Mr. Rodolphe Boudreau, C.M.G., Clerk of the Privy Council, was appointed a member of the Editorial Committee.

Under these widened powers, all requisitions for printing or map-making, from every department or branch of the public service, must pass through the hands of the Editorial Committee. The jurisdiction of the committee was also extended to include requisitions for binding and, as will be shown later, with beneficial results.

It was suggested that requisitions for stationery should be approved by the committee, but as most of the orders are of a routine character, it was decided that these should go direct to the Stationery Branch. In cases of doubt, however, the Superintendent of Stationery consults the committee.

OFFICE PROCEDURE

When a requisition is received at the office of the Editorial Committee, a record is made of the date of the requisition, the date received, the nature of the specifications, and the date on which the requisition is approved and forwarded to the Printing Bureau for execution. If there be no question as to the nature of the specifications, the requisition goes forward to the Printing Bureau without any delay. If a requisition bears evidence of lack of mature consideration; should the number of copies asked for seem to be too great; if the quality of paper, or the general style of printing asked for be apparently too extravagant, immediate action is taken. The department interested is communicated with by telephone and a friendly agreement reached upon the points at issue. During the last four months of 1920, with the loose-leaf system of registration in existence in the office, the total number of requisitions submitted to the committee for its approval was 3,806, of which over one hundred were modified upon the committee's recommendation. In some instances, as a result of the representations of the Editorial Committee, requisitions were withdrawn. Once a requisition has been approved the responsibility of the committee ceases.

It is not easy to estimate the actual monetary saving as a result of the modifications made on requisitions by the committee, but we believe that if the editorial restraint were removed, there would be an immediate return to the old system of extravagance. The fact that the Editorial Committee has been constituted the "watch-dog" of the Treasury on all printing, binding and mapping requisitions is in itself a deterrent against waste.

REVISION OF MAILING LISTS

The committee under the authority conferred upon it has urged frequent revision of departmental mailing lists. There is still some room for improvement, but in the judgment of the committee, the point has been reached when the editions of departmental and supplementary reports cannot be much further reduced. The only thing the committee can do is to keep constant watch upon the mailing lists.

In this connection it should be pointed out that the committee was first created in October, 1917. The last full year of the old order of things was 1916, and to adequately grasp what the committee has been able to accomplish, the following comparative statement for the last three years is submitted:—

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DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

	1915-16	1917-18	1918-19	1919-20
No. of copies	325,365	195,624	151,425	140,180
No. of pages.....	39,356	26,482	19,808	17,856
Total number of printed pages....	210,007,404	105,261,128	55,742,120	40,662,680
Distribution to Parliament.....	112,600	72,735	51,685	54,465
Distribution to Departments....	162,060	91,354	83,065	63,180
Stock	6,905	5,685	3,480	9,785
Sessional Papers	43,600	25,850	13,225	12,750
Cost	\$255,813	\$196,285	\$150,509	\$153,002

The reduction from the total number of printed pages from 210,007,404 in 1916 to 40,662,680 in 1920, is an achievement of which the committee has every reason to be proud. Similarly the annual cost of printing departmental reports has been reduced from \$255,813 to \$153,002. In this connection it may be mentioned that, while the number of copies and number of pages printed this year is considerably less than in 1919, the cost charges are slightly higher for the year 1920. This is due to causes over which the Editorial Committee has no control. By statute, the wages of the mechanical staff of the Printing Bureau are based on the average rate paid for similar work in the cities of Montreal and Toronto. Four years ago a compositor or pressman at the Bureau was receiving \$24 per week of 47½ hours; to-day his wages are \$36 per week of 46½ hours, the last readjustment going into effect on June 16, 1920.

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORTS

The comparative figures of supplementary reports to Parliament for the same years are:—

	1915-16	1917-18	1918-19	1919-20
No. of copies.....	222,085	123,075	56,080	49,420
No. of pages.....	19,508	13,168	5,776	1,582
Total number of printed pages...	60,799,190	23,313,800	11,067,120	3,792,430
Distribution to Parliament.....	67,950	49,050	17,950	16,525
Distribution to Departments.....	136,575	60,675	32,700	28,575
Stock	1,840	1,750	580	295
Sessional Papers	15,720	11,600	4,850	4,025
Cost	\$87,488	\$61,612	\$38,457	\$14,138

Here again, the same ratio of reduction is shown.

Comparing the total cost of departmental and supplemental reports in 1916, namely, \$343,301, with the cost of the same publications for 1918, the reduction was \$85,404; in 1919, \$154,335, and in 1920, \$176,161.

Adding together these decreases, viz., \$85,404, \$154,335, and \$176,161, the actual reduction in the cost of printing departmental and supplemental reports alone for the last three years, as compared with the year immediately previous to the appointment of the committee, is \$415,900. Additional economies effected during the period referred to exceed \$250,000.

Only by mutual co-operation and good-will has this work been accomplished. Many conferences have been held with the departmental officials. In very few cases has the committee found it necessary to appeal to the Sub-Committee of Council for a ruling.

HYDROMETRIC SURVEY REPORTS

As an instance of co-operative effort, the Hydrometric Survey Reports may be cited. The importance of these surveys, as bearing upon the prospective development of the country's water-powers, is fully realized by your committee. At the same time, it was felt that changes in the form of the tables of observations of different streams, and the deletion of information which had been repeated from year to year, could be made without impairing the value of the reports. A conference was therefore held with Mr. J. B. Challies, Superintendent of the Dominion Water Power Branch, and Mr. J. T. Johnston, his assistant, as a result of which the report of the Manitoba Hydrometric Survey for the climatic year 1919, just issued, has been reduced to a publication of 92 pages as compared with the 1916 report of 410 pages. The cost of the report just issued was \$1,150, and of the 1916 report, \$6,178. The result is referred to by Mr. Challies as "evidence of both the good work of the Editorial Committee and the capacity of the Dominion Water Power Branch for constructive co-operation."

OTTAWA RIVER STORAGE REPORT

Similarly, the committee feels that it should call attention to the Ottawa River Storage Report, which is issued quinquennially by the Public Works Department. The 1915 report consisted of 610 pages, costing \$5,387. The last report, as a result of a conference with Mr. C. R. Coutlee, Engineer in Charge, was rearranged and made more compact, thereby reducing the volume to 94 pages, costing \$700, a saving of \$4,687.

COVERS

Covers on reports, pamphlets, bulletins, etc., have been dispensed with in many cases. In one instance, the saving amounted to more than \$1,100.

HALF-TONES

Backed by the authority of Parliament, the committee has been firm in not permitting the insertion of half-tone plates in annual reports. The regulation for the use of illustrations specifically states that they "must be sparingly used, and then only when they have a direct bearing upon the text."

The following comparative statement shows what the committee has been able to accomplish:—

Total plates inserted 1916.....	9,397,865
“ “ “ 1917.....	6,622,007
“ “ “ 1918.....	2,328,640
“ “ “ 1919.....	137,100
“ “ “ 1920.....	None

As already mentioned, the committee's jurisdiction commenced in the latter portion of 1917, and it will be observed that from that time on there was a steady decrease in the number of plates inserted in this class of reports, until now, none are used.

BINDING

The action of the Government in giving complete supervision to the Editorial Committee of all requisitions for binding has had beneficial results. While adopting a liberal policy towards departments in the binding of essential works, the committee

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has made such representations as to offset in some measure the high cost of binding materials. The prices for binders' material to-day compared with what they were six years ago show how important it is that a close check be kept upon binding requisitions. Here are the figures:—

	1914	1920	
Cloth	\$ 0 12	\$ 0 53	per yard
Black roan	0 08	0 26	" foot
Black calf	0 25	0 99	" "
Rough calf	0 26	0 85	" "
Morocco	0 35	0 85	" "
Rough sheep	0 08	0 28	" "
Flour	4 15	5 70	" bag
Marble paper	3 75	9 00	" ream
Gold leaf	7 75	12 98	" pkg.
Ground glue	0 16	0 26	" lb.
Sheet glue	0 12½	0 27½	" lb.
Millboard	43 75	195 00	" ton
Thread	0 68	3 38	" lb.
Wire	9 45	28 00	" cwt.

The following tabular statement of bindery work for the last five years will doubtless be of interest:—

	Full	Half	Quarter	Cloth
1916	11,827	17,051	28,628	246,436
1917	1,943	18,948	31,824	196,656
1918	5,836	16,774	16,673	182,416
1919	2,543	10,794	9,789	179,205
1920	567	15,069	13,395	248,520

ENVELOPES

The express wish of Parliament that the envelopes used by the different branches of the public service be standardized as far as possible has been carried out with great success. In this connection, your committee desires to acknowledge the cordial co-operation of the officials of both Houses of Parliament, and of the different branches of the public service. There is still room for improvement, however, in mailing methods. It seems difficult to impress upon some clerks the importance of economy in small matters. Periodical visits to the Post Office are made by different members of the Editorial Committee, with the co-operation of Mr. P. T. Coolican, Post Office Inspector for Ottawa District, and Mr. A. G. Acres, Postmaster at Ottawa, for examination of incoming departmental mail still show that envelopes of far larger size than the contents require are being used by some departments. When glaring instances of waste are noticeable, the attention of the offending branch is promptly called to the practice.

SESSIONAL PAPERS

Your committee desires to call attention to the recommendation contained in the Third Report of the Joint Committee on Printing, submitted to Parliament on June 26 last, as follows:—

“That the bound copies of the Debates of both Houses, and the bound Statutes of Canada be forwarded annually to the home addresses of the Senators and Members, without a written request for same by them.”

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In accordance with this decision, the bound copies of the Debates of both Houses, and the Statutes, are being forwarded annually to the home addresses of Senators and Members of the House of Commons. Knowing well that the recommendation regarding bound Sessional Papers was contrary to the wishes of the majority of Members of Parliament, your committee so represented to the Chairman of the Advisory Committee of Council, and acting upon the instructions of Sir George Foster, a personal letter—not a circular—was forwarded by the committee to every member of both Houses, asking whether he desired to receive the bound Sessional Papers. Only twenty-nine members of the Upper House, and seventy-eight Commoners replied in the affirmative. As the Editorial Committee realizes that the desire of Parliament is in the direction of economy, we would respectfully recommend, in view of the foregoing figures, that the subject be re-considered by the Joint Committee on Printing.

SUSPENSION OF RULE 74

Your committee feels it should call the attention of the House of Commons to Rule 74, which reads as follows:—

“74. On motion for printing any paper being offered, the same shall be first submitted to the Joint Committee on Printing, for report, before the question is put thereon.”

This rule is often suspended and an order issued for the printing of a public document without adequate knowledge of the number of copies that can be distributed advantageously. A case in point arose in the early part of the year when an order was passed for the printing of half a million copies of a report which had been submitted to the House. As soon as the committee heard of this order, representations were made to the Hon. Mr. Rowell, that, under no circumstances, could such a large edition be distributed to advantage. The President of the Privy Council thereupon left the matter to the discretion of the Editorial Committee. A personal canvass was made of members of both Houses, and of all organizations and public bodies likely to be interested in the document, with the result that after every request had been provided for, and allowing ample margin for stock, the printing order was cut down to 285,000 copies. The Editorial Committee would respectfully urge that when the immediate printing of a document is required by Parliament, an emergency meeting of the Joint Committee on Printing be called for the purpose of considering the size of the edition. The services of the Editorial Committee are at the call of Parliament and the Joint Committee on Printing at any time.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

The committee has strictly enforced the ministerial ruling that no new periodical publication may be established by any department of the Government without the direct authority of Council. There are indications that the present number of periodicals would have been increased but for the action of the committee in calling attention to the rule. During the year, only one new publication has been authorized, namely, an Employment Bulletin issued by the Department of Labour, but so far no issue has made its appearance.

MEDICAL QUARTERLY

The Medical Quarterly, a publication with a limited circulation, issued by the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment, was discontinued at the instance of the committee.

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SALE OF PUBLICATIONS

The committee has, as far as possible, tried to enforce the statute which requires that a charge be imposed for official publications. It has been made applicable during the past year to the following publications:—

Birds of Eastern Canada, Geological Survey Memoir.....	50 cents per copy
Methods of Communication adopted for Forest Protection.....	\$1.00 per copy
Bankruptcy Acts, 1919-20, with Rules and Forms.....	1.00 per copy
Canadian War Records, History of the Organization, Development and Services of the Military and Naval Forces of Canada	50 cents per vol.
Farmer's Account Book	15 cents per copy

STANDARD FORM OF PRINTING REQUISITION

In accordance with the desire of Parliament, a new standard form of Printing Requisition prepared by the committee has been adopted. It will facilitate both the work of the committee and of the Printing Bureau. It is to be put into use as soon as the existing stock of old forms is exhausted.

PAYMENT FOR DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

On August 11, 1920, by Report No. 27, the committee called the attention of Council to the decision of Parliament that hereafter, the printing of all departmental reports must be paid for by the department in which the report originates. As a result, all departments were notified of the changed conditions by circular letter.

With reference to the French editions of departmental reports, the cost of translation, which has hitherto been assumed entirely by Parliament, will hereafter have to be borne by the different departments interested. Your committee is of the opinion that the change, which goes into effect with the coming fiscal year, will have a restraining influence upon the departments as regards printing expenditure.

COMMISSION OF CONSERVATION

Acting under the instructions of Sir James Lougheed, during the absence from Ottawa of the members of the Advisory Committee of Council, the committee has withheld from printing the last annual report of the Commission of Conservation.

IMPROVED OFFICE PRACTICE

The regulations regarding office practice adopted by P.C. 2138, dated September 4, 1920, are being well observed by the different departments. A few officials were inclined to treat lightly the idea of saving the twine removed from incoming parcels. Others, who realized the possibilities of economy in this particular item, have loyally co-operated with the committee. One of the encouraging incidents of the year was the receipt of a letter from Mr. Sidney Smith, Controller of Postal Stores, intimating that the sale of surplus twine gathered in the Toronto City Post Office in a few weeks, after all requirements of that institution had been met, had realized the sum of \$223.86..

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DISTRIBUTION OF SURPLUS PUBLICATIONS

Thousands of volumes consisting of Official Debates, Sessional Papers, Statutes, etc., as well as many pre-Confederation publications, having accumulated in the Distribution Office of the Department of Public Printing and Stationery, as a result of the cleaning out of certain storerooms after the fire in the Parliament buildings in February, 1916, together with collections of books secured from former Members of Parliament, or the families of deceased members, your committee was authorized by P.C. 519, dated March 10, 1920, to distribute these to the libraries of Canada. An inventory of English publications was printed and sent to librarians in every part of Canada. The work of distribution was making rapid progress, over forty of the principal libraries having been supplied, when the committee was advised that no further orders could be executed, as all the surplus stocks, in both English and French, totalling 152 tons, had been sent to the wastepaper contractor. This action, deplorable as it is with regard to the English publications, is the more regrettable with respect to the French books, as the committee had not had an opportunity of distributing any of them. The situation was immediately reported to Council. The matter is now the subject of a judicial inquiry.

Respectfully submitted,

FRED COOK, *Chairman,*

F. C. T. O'HARA,

R. BOUDREAU,

F. C. C. LYNCH.